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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FIRST SESSION

H. F. No. 1722

02/25/2019 Authored by Theis
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Transportation Finance and Policy Division

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to mass transit; requiring initiation of negotiations to extend and modify
1.3 Northstar Commuter Rail passenger service.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. NORTHSTAR COMMUTER RAIL LINE EXTENSION;
1.6 NEGOTIATIONS.

1.7 The Department of Transportation must contact Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway
1.8 (BNSF) to negotiate an extension of the Northstar Commuter Rail line between Big Lake
1.9 and St. Cloud. Negotiations under this section are subject to the following conditions:

1.10 (1) the Northstar Commuter Rail line will add at least one morning round trip departure
1.11 between the St. Cloud Amtrak Depot and Big Lake Station with continuing service to Target
1.12 Field Station each weekday, plus one evening round trip between Big Lake Station and St.
1.13 Cloud Amtrak Depot that must begin at Target Field Station, with the departure and arrival
1.14 times set so that approximately ten or more hours elapse between the morning departure
1.15 and evening return each day for both round trips. The Department of Transportation may
1.16 also negotiate weekend departures and arrivals between St. Cloud and Target Field Station;

1.17 (2) the Department of Transportation may negotiate for fewer round trip departures from
1.18 Big Lake to Target Field Station each weekday, and fewer round trip departures on weekends;

1.19 (3) BNSF must continue to crew and dispatch all trains and provide other track-related
1.20 services;

1.21 (4) the St. Cloud Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) must be responsible for fare
1.22 collection in St. Cloud and must negotiate with Amtrak for using the Amtrak station. The

2.1 MTC must negotiate an agreement with the Metropolitan Council, which is subject to
2.2 approval by the city of St. Cloud, regarding the sharing of revenues and expenses related
2.3 to the Amtrak station, fare collection, and advertising. The MTC, city of St. Cloud, and
2.4 Stearns, Benton, and Sherburne Counties are prohibited from entering into agreements with
2.5 the Metropolitan Council on any subject other than the operation of the Northstar Commuter
2.6 Rail line;

2.7 (5) the Department of Transportation is prohibited from committing to spend any state
2.8 funds on capital expenditures;

2.9 (6) the Department of Transportation is prohibited from committing to spend any more
2.10 state funds on operating costs than the total sum it and the Metropolitan Council have
2.11 budgeted for the Northstar Commuter Rail line; and

2.12 (7) the Department of Transportation may negotiate with the federal government, counties
2.13 and cities, or the Northstar Corridor Development Authority to provide additional funding
2.14 for services necessary to extend the Northstar Commuter Rail line.